

12:08 pm **February 13th, 2007**



[vuirneen](#)

♥ A semi-private email to Mina de Malfois

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📧 Is anyone familiar with the writings of [mina de malfois](#)? I wrote this email to her, based entirely on her Minaverse, between midnight and two am last night and I just wanted someone to check it before I send it to her.

Too Many Minas Spoil The Con

Dear Mina,

I'm not quite sure how to start this letter. I feel as though I've failed a test of some kind and that if I only worked harder, then the pieces would fall into place and the puzzle would be solved. It must be obvious and I'm sorry to clutter up your inbox, but I'm just so happy to have possibly met you that I had to say something.

Everyone's noticed that something's up with me - I'm full to bursting - but I can't tell them why I'm so happy, not when there's a chance that we're all wrong.

You see, I went to *SugoiCon* last week. It was my first anime convention; I've been to gaming conventions before, but no-one ever cosplayed at them and I've always wanted to try. I went as Yomiko Readman, from *Read or Die*, although my wig was the wrong colour and I badly mangled the coat. My own glasses don't have thick, black frames, but I'm blind without them, so it wasn't surprising that no-one recognised me.

The con was brilliant though! I knew one of the organisers beforehand - he's the one who introduced me to *Sanguinity*, in fact, my fist character was created on his account and I was thoroughly sucked into it. I haven't tried the original game yet - it's hard to get a second hand copy of it over here - so I went looking for some information on the internet. That's when I found *Penn'd Passion* and your stories, Mina. Since my first reading of *At His Lordship's Behest* I've been enthralled by your stories and I just wanted you to know how much they mean to me. It seems that there's very little creativity left in the world sometimes, but each new chapter you post up breaks that perception. If only others would be inspired as you are.

Anyway, this is getting awfully long and I haven't even asked the question yet. Dear me. I'll get to it, but there is a lot of background to wade through first.

Reading all this fanfiction and talking to new people on the forums and in livejournal, I suddenly got the urge to go to a con again. The thought of a proper anime con, with people dressing up and showing videos and panels and discussions about the series and even about writing fanfiction, well, I thought that you must be involved in at least one, since everyone looks up to you, anyhow it felt like waiting

for Christmas. Or Hanukah, or other exciting holiday, depending on your religion. Sorry if I've offended you, I know that people get offended at the mention of holidays they don't celebrate. Maybe I should celebrate Yule. A lot of people online do that. It's like Christmas, but more pagan, less crib.

I've gotten off topic. I do ramble. It means that my stories get hardly any reviews. If you've any pointers... rambling again. Yes. Sorry.

So I asked my online friends which cons you go to and they said that you'd never been seen at any! It didn't make sense to me, but I guess it must be hard, running a big estate and writing stories as well. My fics have chapters a fraction as long as yours, but you still post more frequently than I do. I wish I had the stamina, but my fingers spasm if I type too much. Oh, I need to take a break. Sorry, Mina, I'll be right back.

I'm back! Oh, there was no real need to type that, was there? You'll read all of this in one lump anyway. I should have realised that, but I suck at editing.

So, where was I? Oh yes. *Sugoicon* was the closest convention, so I went to that one. It was a lot of fun. There were cosplay competitions (I didn't even enter), previews of new shows, postviews for classic shows (Go, Gatchaman!), panels, parties and karaoke and then, right in the middle of the first day, *the rumour*. Word had gotten around that someone was at the con, claiming to be Mina de Malfois.

There was quite a frenzy of activity caused by that - eventually, given the con atmosphere, we formed rival groups, all trying to be the first to spot the real Mina de Malfois and get her autograph. I was the first one in my team to spot an absolutely stunning woman. She was cosplaying as a lady of some kind - I didn't recognise the fandom. People should wear nametags if they cosplay with the name AND series - but she certainly looked the way I thought you did. Very twenties.

I raced up and asked for her autograph and she signed the paper **Mina de Malfois**. I even got her to write the time down from the big clock in the main hall! I say her, and not you, because, well, something sickening happened. One of the other groups came right up to us, to Mina herself and started gloating that they'd gotten autographs. I pointed out that they were standing right beside Mina and that I'd gotten there first, but they laughed and claimed that she wasn't Mina at all. They dragged me off to the mezzanine and pointed out a rather dumpy woman and said that she was Mina. She wore thick glasses and her hair was messy and I guess that she looked like a writer, but I can't imagine her being you at all. Unless she was trying out cosplay too.

Anyhow, we argued until one of the other groups joined us, looking very dejected. We asked which one of the two Minas they'd discovered, in second place, but didn't really listen properly, since we were still arguing. Turns out, they'd met one of the Minas, but their Mina was a fifty year old man with a bag of sweets and a lack of

teeth. He was dressed as Sailor Moon.

Somehow, because their Mina was so disappointing, they were convinced that he had to be the real one, which is nonsense, because men can't write proper porn. There's more to it than just the penis. I mean, erotica. Not porn. Um, sorry.

That was just the first day. Day two had the writing panels and the surprise guest standing in for H.P Lovecraft (I mean, everyone knew that it was a wind-up, but somehow, not the con organisers) was announced as Mina de Malfois! The room was packed; they eventually moved us to the main hall and shunted the cosplay competition to the canteen. Writing Mina was very sweet. She listened to everyone's questions and really knew her stuff. Some of the questions covered obscure grammar that isn't even in academic use anymore. I didn't believe her, though. She wrote some samples on a projector and she dropped the "u" out of colour. I know you're not actually British, Mina, but you even spell travelling with the correct number of "l"s, so she had to have been a fake.

I still hung around afterwards and got her autograph. Just in case.

On the final day, I went to the main desk and booked one of the spare rooms. They let me hang up posters for "The Mina Conundrum". I tried, oh how I tried to think of a cool pun, but it was the last day and a long time since I'd slept, so I gave up after three hours.

As you can imagine, the group that turned up was huge and quickly divided into supporters of the various Minas: Twenties Mina, Dumpy Mina, Old Man Mina and Writing Mina. A few mean girls showed up to sniff, snort and leave, calling us fools for even bothering, since Mina wasn't at the con. They said they were close, personal friends, as you replied to every comment they made on your journal.

It was a bad start and it only got worse. I'd hoped that we could sort through the evidence and find the real Mina de Malfois before the end of the con, so that I could give her... you, some rather nice presents. I didn't want my lovely things ending up with a faker though, so getting the right woman, or even man was important. It quickly devolved into a screeching match and the con staff kicked us out of the room before the hour was up. It was an utter failure.

My only hope was an earnest young girl who'd gotten very upset during the altercation and had started to say something, but stopped, several times before it got out of hand. I was sure that she knew something. You know when you get a feeling? Well, I had one. It was a last, desperate hope, since I had to leave before the end of the con in order to catch my bus. The majority of the shouters lived in the city, so they could afford to waste time.

The earnest girl came up to me while I was mopping up the floor, under the staff member's watchful eye. She patted me firmly on the arm and told me not to worry.

She said "The truth is obvious. Think about it."

I thought about it and blocked her departure with the mop. "What is the truth? Who's Mina?"

She smiled. It's very irritating, when you're waiting for an answer, but I was unbelievably patient. If she spilled within fifteen minutes, then I'd have time to run back to my hostel, get the gifts and present them to Mina. To you.

"All of them could be Mina," she said. "They all have aspects of Mina inside them." I waited. She did too. I gestured menacingly with the mop. "You have Mina inside you as well, as do I." I did check for a protective, tin hat, but the hair looked like it was her own. "All of them are Mina, we are all Mina."

I boggled. "We are?"

"Of course," she said. "Except for the Sammiches. None of them can grasp the basics of the story, so they've no Mina in them whatsoever."

She drifted out and I watched her go. The staff member threatened to fetch a whip and a lawyer, so I finished cleaning the floor and missed the final cosplay competition. Apparently, you won. Congratulations, but I'm not sure which of you won, or if you would have won regardless of who stood on the stage, unless of course, they were a Sammich.

So Mina, the question. Which of the autographs do I frame and which ones do I auction off to the delusional? I have all their livejournal names.

Yours in hope,

Vuirneen